



About SOHO
Membership
Magazine
Tours & Events
Museum Shop
Preservation Links
Giving to SOHO
Historic Districts
Research your House
Resource Directory

Save Our Heritage Organisation *Magazine*

2007 - Volume 38, Issue 3/4

Letters to the Editor

IN RESPONSE TO YOUR REQUEST for the Balboa Park Committee (BPC) the state of Balboa Park and its future and what role we are actively playing I would start by letting your members know who we are.

The Balboa Park Committee is the Planning Group for Balboa Park. We advise and the City Council, the Park and Recreation Board, and City Staff on land use issues relating to the acquisition, development, maintenance and operations of

While leadership in the park has been fractured by the various goals and vision organizations, institutions, city departments and politicians all with an interest needs of the general public are often lost in the cacophony. But there are signs changes.

The Park has been transitioning into an increasingly transparent and inclusive p Boards of institutions cannot just take 24 more acres or tear down a building w protest. The public will no longer support plans that might be a threat to the par past when a former City Councilman wanted to put a tent city for the homeless Park.

There are many more examples of these positive changes occurring, I give you important examples; this past July the Old Globe presented their plans for rebu Cassius Carter Theatre to the BPC. They had stayed in their existing leasehold a building that meets the intent of the Secretary of Interiors Standards. The Bal Cultural Partnership - the recently formed umbrella organization for the cultura in the park - have worked with the BPC on a number of proposals and have bee

listen to perspectives based on a community centric vision and work towards co

The San Diego Foundation, the Legler Benbough Foundation and the Parker Foundation have pooled resources to commission a report on the baseline facts of Balboa Park. The report would begin to tell us what the condition and needs of the Park really are and would then make recommendations based on facts. The BPC has been trying to get this information for many years. Representatives from the BPC have been assisting the Foundations in this important task. These Foundations have been up front about wanting to have a conservancy type of governance for the Park. They are also on record about potentially offering funding for a blue-ribbon commission to explore the idea. I am grateful they had the insight and leadership to get the public interested in the topic.

Both of these efforts have been publicized and any discussion of a conservancy type of governance for the Park will occur in a transparent open public process that has yet to be discussed or agreed upon. I will continue to do my part and push for a membership that also includes community activists.

I am aware there is a fear for some, that lobbyists, special interests, or the rich and powerful will make decisions in back rooms and the public will be shut out. As a member of the general public I find myself fearful of this from time to time. However I feel it is important that to occur here, as community people are already included. Discussions and decision making are increasingly transparent, and institutions have started thinking about how their proposals will impact the general public not just their institution.

We all need to move away from an "us vs. them" attitude. If we are to protect and preserve Balboa Park for future generations we will need individuals with many different perspectives, backgrounds, skills and resources working together.

Thank you SOHO for your continued interest and support for this national registered historic district.

- Vicki Granowitz, Chair of the Balboa Park Committee, San Diego
